Author and authority : literary representations of moral authority in Eusebius of Caesarea's The Martyrs of Palestine

JAMES CORKE-WEBSTER

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Literary Representations of Moral Authority in Eusebius of Caesarea's *The Martyrs of Palestine**

Characters in stories can have a powerful impact in the real world. This was true in antiquity as it is now. As Aaron Johnson concisely states, 'Literary portraits of holy men (and sometimes women) possessed the capacity to shape the world and lives of late antique readers.'[1] In this article I will examine the literary portraits of state officials, and the martyrs they condemn to death, in *The Martyrs of Palestine*, a largely unappreciated text penned by the 4th century church historian Eusebius of Caesarea. My aim is to show that Eusebius employs a rhetoric of temperance and intemperance, based upon Roman conceptions of ideal paternal authority, to construct his characters far more carefully than has previously been acknowledged. State officials in Eusebius are figures of unprecedented irrationality and violence; the martyrs they abuse are by contrast calm and self-controlled, despite their vulnerability. I suggest that these literary portraits are designed to recast these authority figures to be more appropriate to the politically changing environment of the early 4th century.

1. Literary History in the Early 4th Century

The first quarter of the 4th century AD saw a key shift in the power balance of the late Roman Empire. Christians, who at the start of the

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1 Aaron Johnson, Ancestors as Icons: The Lives of Hebrew Saints in Eusebius' Praeparatio Evangelica, *GRBS* 44 (2004), 245.

century had found themselves the objects of a new persecution, by 325 stood securely behind a sympathetic emperor in an increasingly Christian empire. Our main witness to this extraordinary period is Eusebius of Caesarea, a historian with a front-row seat to this unfolding drama. This Palestinian scholar-turned-bishop was the first to tell the story of the first three hundred years of the church, and in so doing defined the parameters within which that period has been viewed ever since. The medium for this was his *Ecclesiastical History*, a narrative work without precedent, which has nevertheless been studied less for its literary characteristics than its documentary ones.[2] Eusebius though was not the unimaginative writer he has sometimes been labelled.[3] Close analysis of his writing reveals significant literary sophistication.

Recent Eusebian scholarship has become increasingly aware of this. In noting the lack of literary quality in historical writing of the 4th century Averil Cameron cites Eusebius as the innovative exception.[4] Doron Mendels, in his 1999 study *The Media Revolution of Christianity* highlighted the narrative complexity of the *Ecclesiastical History* by suggesting it be read as "media history".[5] In suggesting that Eusebius acted like a modern news editor, selecting and manipulating his sources to tailor stories to his readers, Mendels emphasises Eusebius'

2 Eusebius' unprecedented techniques of collecting and quoting primary sources continue to be the subject of scholarly attention; see e.g. Andrew James Carriker, *The Library of Eusebius of Caesarea*, SVigChr 67 (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2003); Anthony Grafton/Megan Williams, eds., *Christianity and the Transformation of the Book: Origen, Eusebius and the Library of Caesarea* (Cambridge MA/London: Harvard University Press, 2006).

3 See for example the dismissal of Eusebius' style in Andrew Louth's introduction to Geoffrey Arthur Williamson's popular translation of the *Ecclesiastical History*: 'Such writing is enormously valuable to have, though tedious to read', *The History of the Church: From Christ to Constantine* (London: Penguin Books, 1965 [repr. 1989]), xiii. This goes back to Photius' dismissal of Eusebius in the 9th century 'his style is neither agreeable nor brilliant, but he was a man of great learning': *Bibliotheca* 13, trans. René Henry, Photius Bibliothèque (Paris: Société d'Édition les Belles Lettres, 1959), 11.

4 'It is perhaps surprising that Christian history – history written from the Christian point of view, that is, not the more specialised history of the church – is conspicuously absent from the fourth-century list of Christianized literary forms', Averil Cameron, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire: The Development of Christian Discourse* (Berkeley/Los Angeles/Oxford: University of California Press, 1991), 140.

5 Doron Mendels, *The Media Revolution of Early Christianity: An Essay on Eusebius's Ecclesiastical History* (Grand Rapids MI/Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 1999). Mendels own view is that Eusebius manipulates his material in the pursuit of greater publicity and interest for a sympathetic pagan audience. There are numerous reasons for questioning this suggestion, but these are not pertinent to the present discussion.

care in narrative construction and his remarkable awareness of his audience.[6] More recently Erica Carotenuto has suggested that Eusebius was capable even of fabrication.[7] She demonstrates convincingly that Eusebius generates a story about five Egyptians in chapter 11 of *The Martyrs of Palestine* using recycled material from elsewhere in that text and from Origen's *On the Principles* 4.3.6–8.[8] This article goes further than most previous scholarship in recognising that Eusebius' narrative writings are as much literary as historical enterprises.

Carotenuto's article is particularly welcome because of the attention given to Eusebius' treatise *The Martyrs of Palestine*, traditionally rather neglected by scholarship.[9] This text is Eusebius' narrative of the fate of certain Christians in Palestine during the Diocletianic persecution (303-311). Eusebius himself was Palestinian, and elected bishop of Caesarea in 314/315. The text has been transmitted in two recensions. The shorter is preserved in the original Greek, and contains largely the same stories as the longer, but in less detail.[10] The longer is preserved in Greek only

6 Allan Bell coined the term "audience design" for the way a speaker changes his style depending on the audience. See Allan Bell, Language Style as Audience Design, *Language in Society* 13 (1984), 145–204.

7 Erica Carotenuto, Five Egyptians Coming from Jerusalem: Some Remarks on Eusebius, "De martyribus palestinae" 11.6–13, *CQ* 52 (2002), 500–506.

8 For example the story, identical in many respects, of the five Egyptians in *MP* 8.1 LR.

9 Apart from the studies on its dating and transmission below, and an early discussion of chronology by Hugh Lawlor, The Chronology of Eusebius' Martyrs of Palestine, in: id., *Eusebiana: Essays on The Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius Pamphili I, ca. 264-349AD Bishop of Caesarea* (Oxford: Philo Press, 1912 [repr. 1973]), *The Martyrs of Palestine* is sadly neglected. Lawlor and Oulton's commentary on the text is very brief and deals mainly with questions of dating and historical accuracy (Hugh Lawlor and John Oulton, *Eusebius: The Ecclesiastical History and the Martyrs of Palestine*, vol. 2 (New York/Toronto: The MacMillan Co., 1927)). When it is used, it is normally as supplementary evidence after book 8 of the *Ecclesiastical History* for the Great Persecution; William Frend, *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church. A Study of Conflict from the Maccabees to Donatus* (Oxford: Blackwells, 1965), 477–535 is typical. There have been a number of studies that have focused on *The Martyrs of Palestine* as means to a completely different end; see e.g. Saul Lieberman, The Martyrs of Caesarea, *AIPh* 7 (1939-44), 395–446; Joseph Patrich, The Martyrs of Caesarea: The Urban Context, *SBFLA* 52 (2002), 321–346. The survey article of Joseph Verheyden, Pain and Glory: Some Introductory Comments on the Rhetorical Qualities and Potential of the Martyrs of Palestine by Eusebius of Caesarea, in: Johan Leemans, ed., *Martyrdom and Persecution in Late Ancient Christianity: Festschrift Boudewijn Dehandschutter*, BEThL 241 (Leuven: Peeters, 2010) represents a welcome change from this trend, although I do not agree with all the conclusions therein.

10 The short recension is included in most, but not all, of the extant manuscripts of the *Ecclesiastical History*. In some it is found at the close of book 10, in one in the middle of book 8 starting at chapter 13, and in the majority between books 8 and 9.

in a series of fragments, and then in some fragments of a later Latin translation and in a complete Syriac translation.[11] The Syriac translator appears to have taken some liberties with Eusebius' original, extending certain stories and adding speeches or miracles.[12] Numerous textual issues indicate that the short recension was an abridgement of the long, so the Greek fragments of the long recension are most likely to preserve Eusebius' original intentions for this text.

The dating and interrelationship of the two recensions is bound into the complex discussion surrounding the dating, editions and revisions of the *Ecclesiastical History*. Though debate continues, a consensus position has begun to emerge. I follow with the majority of current scholars the conclusions of Richard Burgess in his seminal 1997 article.[13] In brief, this states that the long recension was completed almost immediately after the persecution in Palestine ceased (temporarily) in April 311 following the Edict of Toleration. Subsequently, Eusebius abbreviated it to produce our short recension, which formed part of the first edition of the *Ecclesiastical History*, produced in 313/314. When Eusebius issued a second edition of the *Ecclesiastical History* in 315/316 he replaced the short recension with the current book 8, encompassing a greater geographical span.[14] At this point the long recension

However, it is not included either in the Syriac or Rufinus' translations of the *Ecclesiastical History*.

11 For details see Lawlor and Oulton, *Eusebius*, vol. 2, 46–50. The Greek fragments were discovered and published in Hippolyte Delehaye, Eusebii Caesariensis De Martyribus Palaestinae Longioris Libelli Fragmenta, *AnBoll* 16 (1897), 113–139; the Syriac version, partially available in Stephen Assemani, *Acta Sanctorum martyrum orientalium et occidentalium* (Rome: Città del Vaticano, 1748), was published in full in William Cureton, *History of the Martyrs in Palestine, by Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea, Discovered in a Very Antient* (sic) *Syriac Manuscript* (London/Edinburgh: Williams & Norgate, 1861).

12 See e.g. Erica Carotenuto, Eusebius of Caesarea on Romanus of Antioch: A Note on Eusebius, De Martyribus Palestinae (Syriac translation) 7,7–9,9, *CJ* 98 (2003), 389–396.

13 Richard Burgess, The Dates and Editions of Eusebius' Chronici Canones and Historia Ecclesiastica, *JTS* 48 (1997), 471–504. The literature on this topic is extensive; other key contributions include: Lawlor/Oulton, *Eusebius*, vol. 2, 1–11; Timothy Barnes, The Editions of Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History, *GRBS* 21 (1980), 191–201; id., *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge MA/London: Harvard University Press, 1981), 148–50, 154–8; id., Some Inconsistencies in Eusebius, *JThS.NS* 35 (1984), 470–475; Andrew Louth, The Date of Eusebius' Historia Ecclesiastica, *JThS.NS* 41 (1990), 111–123. For a timeline that takes into account Burgess' suggestions, see Carriker, *The Library of Eusebius*, 37-41.

14 That the short recension was once where book 8 stands now was the brilliant suggestion of Timothy Barnes; see Barnes, Some Inconsistencies, 470–471; building on Joseph Lightfoot, Eusebius of Caesarea, in: William Smith/Henry Wace, eds., *A*

was lightly edited and issued in a second edition.[15] There is a further complication, however. A passing phrase in the 315/316 second edition of the *Ecclesiastical History* indicates that Eusebius intends to produce his account of the martyrs from Caesarea in the future.[16] Burgess solves this by suggesting that Eusebius failed to publish the initial long recension before the persecution in Palestine began again in November 311, and when persecution finally ceased in summer 313 (following the Edict of Milan), had already decided to incorporate a shorter version into the *Ecclesiastical History*. The long recension was thus only needed again after the short recension had been replaced by the current book 8 in 315/316, hence its eventual publication at this point.

This theory gives a prominence to *The Martyrs of Palestine* which has not been fully appreciated. The Greek fragments of the long recension become our record of a text written in 311, before the first edition of the *Ecclesiastical History* had been published, but edited and issued in 315/316 after it had been. In 311 Eusebius' major literary projects had been his *Defence of Origen*, *Life of Pamphilus* and *Chronicle*.[17] *The Martyrs of Palestine* can thus be read as the stepping stone from these biographical and chronological endeavours to the vast new project of narrative history that combined the two. *The Martyrs of Palestine* is usually treated by scholars only as an addendum to studies of the *Ecclesiastical History* because of a perceived later date and the assumption that it is just a personal memorial. Both are questionable judgements.[18] *The Martyrs of Palestine* takes on considerable significance however if seen as Eusebius' first attempt to engage with the genre of narrative history and the immediate precursor to his magnum opus. It provides

Dictionary of Christian Biography, vol. 2 (London: Murray, 1880), 319–321, and Lawlor and Oulton, *Eusebius*, vol. 2, 7–9.

15 Burgess hypothesises that Eusebius spent little time on revisions, The Dates and Editions, 503.

16 EH 8.13.7, 'Yet I shall make known to posterity in another work those with whom I was personally conversant' (τούτους καὶ τοῖς μεθ' ἡμᾶς γνωρίμους δι' ἑτέρας ποιήσομαι γραφῆς). It is also odd that Eusebius would reissue a shorter form of something he had only recently published.

17 See e.g. Carriker, *The Library of Eusebius*, 37–38.

18 *The Martyrs of Palestine* is usually treated as Eusebius' personal eye-witness account of the suffering of friends and colleagues. However, while some figures were clearly known to Eusebius, this is also the case in the *Ecclesiastical History*, and since many of the martyrs in *The Martyrs of Palestine* died outside Palestine, as Eusebius freely admits, it is very unlikely that all the stories it includes are eyewitness accounts (see e.g. *MP* 5.3 LR; Aedesius dies in Alexandria). The frequent miracle stories might also point in this direction. *The Martyrs of Palestine* should be read on the same level as the *Ecclesiastical History*.

an opportunity to see Eusebius tentatively exploring themes and literary styles which he will develop more systematically in his *Ecclesiastical History* and throughout his literary career.[19] It is as a prolegomenon to a wider study of Eusebius' literary characterisations of authority then that I hope this article can stand.

2. Literary Portraits of Authority Figures in *The Martyrs of Palestine*

Hayden White has suggested that a concern for authority lies at the heart of every narrative: 'narrative in general, from the folktale to the novel, from the annals to the fully realised "history", has to do with the topics of law, legality, legitimacy, or, more generally, *authority*.'[20] It is Eusebius' literary treatment of authority figures, in particular representatives of the Roman state, that I will address here. I suggest that in the repeated portraits of state officials in *The Martyrs of Palestine* we can observe Eusebius wrestling with how to characterise these figures at this limenal moment in history. By his novel characterisations in these highly charged and violent narratives I suggest Eusebius begins to construct a rhetoric of legitimate and illegitimate authority by which his readers are encouraged to judge these figures.

The Martyrs of Palestine recounts the suffering and death of Eusebius' countrymen in a decade mercifully past. But in the persecution-free window of summer 311 when the long recension was first composed and in 315/316 when it was finally published, the Christians could believe that official edicts of toleration and the rise of a sympathetic emperor hinted at a brighter future. It is impossible to know the extent of Eusebius' editing of the long recension in 315/316. But it remains a key witness to Eusebius' initial literary engagement with these seismic cultural shifts. He stood at a crossroads between a past where the Christian church often viewed itself as standing in opposition to the Roman state, and a future where it seemed they would be increasingly aligned. It is in an attempt to trace and guide that union that Eusebius wrote the *Ecclesiastical History*. But the long recension of *The Martyrs of Palestine* can shed light on his first steps in

19 Literary questions surrounding the genre and style of *The Life of Constantine* written at the end of Eusebius' life have produced a scholarly industry of their own.

20 Hayden White, The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality, *Critical Inquiry* 7.1 (1980), 17.

this direction, experimenting with a literary medium to memorialise but also re-appropriate the past.

Four stories are preserved in the Greek fragments of the long recension; the martyrdoms of Apphianus (4.1–15), his brother Aedesius (5.2-3, really just a brief addendum to Apphianus' tale), Theodosia (7.1–2) and Pamphilus and his companions (11.1–28). It is unlikely to be coincidence that it are these sections which are preserved, since from what we can deduce from the Syriac translation and the Greek short recension, Apphianus' and Pamphilus' stories in particular are the two most significant sections, while Theodosia's combines elements from both. It is on these three passages that I will focus my attentions, since they demonstrate most clearly the dynamics between state officials and martyrs characteristic of this text.

In the first of these stories the detailed portrayals of the Palestinian martyr Apphianus and Urban, the Roman governor of Palestine at this point (306), introduces us to a dynamic that will become increasingly familiar as we read more of Eusebius' martyr stories. Apphianus, one of the most memorable characters in the whole work, represents our most detailed picture of the vulnerable yet self-controlled Eusebian martyr. Urban on the other hand, the official before whom he is dragged, is presented as a caricature of uncontrollable rage. Before we meet either, though, we are alerted to Eusebius overt presence as conduit of the story. Almost immediately we read, 'In these circumstances what word of ours could suffice to describe worthily the divine love of the martyr Apphianus?' (τίς ἂν ἐπαρκέσειεν ἡμῖν λόγος εἰς ἐπαξίαν διήγησιν τοῦ θείου ἔρωτος τοῦ μάρτυρος Ἀπφιανοῦ; *MP* 4.2 LR).[21] The story continues to be littered with reminders of Eusebius' literary presence ('germane to the present work' and 'if we must place on record' follow closely in this first paragraph, for example).[22] The reader remains aware of Eusebius as writer throughout the narrative.

21 Translations taken from Lawlor and Oulton, *Eusebius*, vol. 1; Greek text: Gustave Bardy, ed., *Eusèbe de Césarée. Histoire ecclésiastique*, 3 vols., SC 31/41/55 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf), 1:1952; 2:1955; 3:1958); http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/inst/browser.

22 The short recension displays this tendency too: 'I mean Apphianus' (Ἀπφιανόν φημι, *MP* SR 4.2); 'this too with good reason we shall do' (εὐλόγως δὴ καὶ τοῦτο ποιήσομεν, *MP* 4.4 SR); 'The agonies the blessed one endured from this, I believe no words can express' (ἐφ' οἷς ὁποίας ἤνεγκεν ὁ μακάριος ἀλγηδόνας, πάντα λόγον ὑπεραίρειν μοι δοκῶ, *MP* 4.12 SR); and 'although we know not this fact perfectly, we are not convinced that we ought not in every case to hand down the truth in an historical narrative' (ἡμᾶς δ' οὖν, καίπερ τοῦτ' ἀκριβῶς εἰδότας, οὐχ αἱρεῖ λόγος μὴ οὐχὶ ἐκ παντὸς τἀληθὲς παραδοῦναι τῷ λόγῳ τῆς ἱστορίας, *MP* 4.14 SR).

Apphianus, introduced in 4.2–4, is described in a way reminiscent of many other martyr figures in Eusebius's writings.[23] Not yet twenty (εἰκοστὸν οὔπω τῆς τοῦ σώματος ἡλικίας ἔτος εἰσεληλυθὼς ἦν) and from an elite pagan background (τὸ δὲ γένος τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς Λυκίας διαφανῶν καὶ τὰ πρῶτα φερομένων ἐν πλούτῳ καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀξιώμασιν), he has received an excellent education (δι' ὃ δὴ σπουδῇ τῶν γονέων ἐπὶ τὰ κατὰ τὴν Βηρυτὸν παιδευτήρια λόγων ἕνεκα ἐστέλλετο καὶ ποικίλων μαθημάτων συνείλεκτο παρασκευήν). Particularly interesting are those character traits which mark him as characteristically Eusebian. Though young, he does not act his age, but behaves instead with the decorum of a respected elder (τῆς μὲν τῶν νέων συνουσίας καὶ συνδιατριβῆς κρείττων ἐγίνετο, ἤθει δὲ πρεσβυτικῷ καὶ σεμνοῦ βίου καὶ τρόπου καταστάσει ἑαυτὸν ἐκόσμει). He is defined above all by his 'self-control' (τὴν ἐγκράτειαν) and his 'absolute chastity and sobriety' (ἁγνείαν τὴν παντελῆ καὶ σωφροσύνην).

Dissatisfied with his pagan education and the household that provided it, Apphianus slips away from his family one night and travels to Caesarea. There he is educated as a Christian under Pamphilus, Eusebius' own mentor.[24] However, he slips away from his new Christian family too in order to be martyred. Eusebius again eulogises about Apphianus' positive qualities in 4.7. Here the standard martyr traits of 'courage' (τὸ θάρσος) and 'boldness' (τὴν παρρησίαν) are interspersed with the slightly less predictable 'constancy' (τὴν ἔνστασιν), 'self-control' (τὴν ἐγκράτειαν) and 'prudence' (τὴν φρόνησιν). Again, it is his overall temperance that is brought out most strongly. Apphianus approaches the governor Urban as the latter is sacrificing and stays his arm, attempting to correct his idolatrous error. This is not presented as a challenge; instead Eusebius implies that this is kindly correction, not aggressive prevention.[25]

23 See e.g. the selection of martyrs in *EH* 4.15.5–6; 8.7.4; 8.12.3–5.

24 The lack of attention paid to this moment of departure from home is of particular interest. In contrast with earlier martyr texts where family conflict (particularly between parents and children) and renunciation are focus points (e.g. *The Martyrdom of Saints Perpetua and Felicitas*), Eusebius seems to make as little as possible of this here. I hope to treat this in more detail elsewhere.

25 This is not to say that *The Martyrs of Palestine* provides no evidence of confrontation between martyr and governor. The Greek fragment of the long recension preserving the story of Apphianus' brother Aedesius (5.2–3) is a case in point, since Aedesius does confront Urban and berates him verbally and physically. However, a number of caveats are worth mentioning. His action is motivated by Urban's grave mistreatment of another Christian, and as we shall see such care for the welfare of others is characteristic of Eusebian martyrs. Furthermore, though Aedesius is the better educated of the two brothers, it is Apphianus, who acts far less aggressively, who is afforded more attention. The contrast between these two brothers could also be the result of the long recension's unusual editing process. Given that Eusebius spent time with this text in 311 immediately after some of the deaths described, and then in 315/316 after several years of reflection, we might well expect some variance. I suggest that the evident Eusebian preference for Apphianus is evidence of an increasing focus on such non-combative martyr figures.

At this point we encounter Urban and the other state representatives that accompany him. In 4.10–11 he is first referenced indirectly but ominously when these attendees are called 'the demon's servants' (οἱ δὲ δαιμόνων ὑπηρέται). When Apphianus gently tries to dissuade Urban from sacrificing, the response of Urban's entourage is disproportionately aggressive: 'as if a branding iron had touched their senses, [they] rent him, struck him on the face, trampled him with their feet as he lay on the ground, and pounded his mouth and lips until they tore them' (πληγέντες ὥσπερ ὑπό τινος καυτῆρος τὰς φρένας… σπαράττουσι παίοντες κατὰ πρόσωπον καὶ χαμαὶ κείμενον τοῖς ποσὶ καταπατοῦντες πιεσμοῖς τε τὸ στόμα καὶ τὰ χείλη διασπῶντες). Urban himself then demonstrates 'his native cruelty, as if it were some good thing' (ὥσπερ τινὸς ἀγαθοῦ τῆς οἰκείας ὠμότητος) by punishing Apphianus personally. He and his circle are defined by their senselessness and personal cruelty, demonstrated by their excessive violence. This is characteristic of state officials in Eusebius' narratives.[26]

Urban's title, 'that noble governor of the province' (ὁ γενναῖος τοῦ ἔθνους ἡγούμενος) not only contains a hint of irony, but also reminds the reader that his role involves governing the people of a country. His actions against Apphianus here though are motivated not by his duty as governor but by personal cruelty. In 4.12, after a spell in the stocks, Apphianus is whipped and torn. Urban then speaks with him and, frustrated by his refusal to answer properly,[27] orders further torture: 'The judge now became infuriated; and, exasperated by the invincible utterances of the martyr, he gave orders that they should swathe his feet in linen cloths soaked in oil and set them on fire' (ὁ δὲ εἰς μανίαν ἤδη χωρῶν καὶ κινούμενος ἐπὶ τῇ τοῦ μάρτυρος ἀνικήτῳ φωνῇ λίνοις ἐλαίῳ δευθεῖσιν τοὺς πόδας περιπλέξαντας αὐτοῦ πῦρ

26 See e.g. EH 5.1.9; 6.39.5; 8.14.1-16.

27 'In answer to the judge's many questions he made no further confession than that he was a Christian; and when he next asked who he was, whence he came, and where he was staying, he confessed nothing, except that he was a slave of Christ.' (πολλὰ τοῦ δικαστοῦ πυνθανομένου οὐδὲν πλεῖον ἢ Χριστιανὸν ἑαυτὸν ὡμολόγει εἶναι, εἶτα ἐρωτώμενος ὅστις εἴη καὶ πόθεν, ποῖ τε εἴη μένων, οὐδὲν ἕτερον ἢ Χριστοῦ δοῦλον ἑαυτὸν ὡμολόγει, *MP* 4.12 LR).

ὑφάψαι προστάττει). Urban's excessive violence contrasts strongly with Apphianus' calm endurance of it.

As their interaction intensifies, it becomes clear that these characters are polar opposites. Where Apphianus lives up to his introduction as a youth of remarkable self-control, Urban's increasing frustration (εἰς μανίαν ἤδη χωρῶν) and lack of rationality (κινούμενος) motivates this unusual and exquisitely painful form of torture. This reaches its climax when Apphianus withstands even this with equal calm and dignity. His continuing calm triggers yet more rage in his torturers: 'the oppressors of the martyr were raging like demons; they were pained to the heart, as if they, and not he, were bearing the terrible sufferings; they gnashed their teeth; their minds were at fever heat' (οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἐλύττων οἷα δαίμονες, καὶ τὰς ψυχὰς ὀδυνώμενοι, ὡς ἂν αὐτοὶ τὰ δεινὰ πάσχοντες, πρίοντες τοὺς ὀδόντας καὶ τοὺς λογισμοὺς καόμενοι). This language of gnashing teeth and burning minds is more characteristic of rabid animals than court officials.

The martyr's self-control is further indicated by his ability to withstand torture. Of the three day interaction between Apphianus and Urban, most of Eusebius' discussion concerns the detail of the torture inflicted by the latter and the former's endurance of it. The description of the martyr's burning feet is particularly graphic.[28] Throughout his writing on martyrdom, Eusebius shows an almost disturbing interest in the details of the martyrs' suffering, and particularly in novel methods of torture.[29] This graphic detail is, I suggest, more than just a sensationalist hook to keep an audience's attention, though no doubt it served that purpose too.[30] The gravity of the horror experienced by the martyr further accentuates his/her capacity for self-controlled endurance.

Closer inspection reveals that Apphianus' quiet endurance is the quality Eusebius draws out most often throughout this story. When first beaten after intercepting Urban, we are told simply that 'he had

28 'And when the torturers carried out the order and the martyr was suspended on high, it was a fearful sight to see: his sides so rent, his whole body so swollen, and the fashion of his face altered; and the fierce fire had burnt his feet for so long that the flesh was melted and flowed like wax, and the flames penetrated to the bones as if they were dry reeds' (ἀνήρτητο δὲ ὑψηλῶς ὁ μάρτυς, φοβερὸν [δὲ] θέαμα τοῖς ὁρῶσιν ἦν, οὕτω μὲν τὰς πλευρὰς διερρωγώς, οὕτω δὲ διωγκηκὼς καὶ τοῦ προσώπου τὴν μορφὴν ἠλλοιωμένος, πολλῷ τε τῷ πυρὶ τοὺς πόδας ἐπὶ μακρὸν καιόμενος χρόνον, ὡς διαρρεῖν μὲν τηκομένας κηροῦ δίκην τὰς σάρκας, τῶν δὲ ὀστέων καθάπερ ξηρῶν καλάμων εἴσω διικνεῖσθαι τὸ πῦρ, *MP* 4.12 LR)

29 E.g. *EH* 8.9.1; 8.12.6.

30 See e.g. Mendels, *The Media Revolution*, 88; also Janet Davis, Teaching Violence in the Schools of Rhetoric, in: Hal Drake, ed., *Violence in Late Antiquity: Perceptions and Practices* (Hampshire/Burlington: Ashgate, 2006), 197–204.

undergone all this with the utmost bravery' (ἃ δὴ πάντα ἀνδρειότατα ὑποστάς, *MP* 4.10 LR). Having then been scourged, his only reaction is a lack thereof: 'The veritable martyr of God, indeed, remained like adamant...' (ὁ μὲν δῆτα θεοῦ μάρτυς, οἷά τις ἀδάμας, *MP* 4.12 LR). After his second bout of torture we read simply that: 'the sufferer cared for none of these things' (ἀλλ' οὐδὲν τούτων ἔμελεν τῷ πάσχοντι, *MP* 4.13 LR).[31] Endurance is the physical manifestation of the calm self-control and constancy that characterise Apphianus and most other Eusebian martyrs, just as violent rage is the hallmark of Urban and other state officials' lack of self-control.[32]

Eusebius' careful telling of this detailed story introduces us to a mode of martyr narrative characteristic of his literary writings. The dynamic between martyr and state official is controlled by the careful deployment of a rhetoric of moral authority. Eusebius' depiction of the governor Urban centres around the latter's lack of self-control, and the anger and violence that result from this. This is further highlighted because the martyr, despite his apparent youth and vulnerability, is marked by precisely that calm self-control, manifested in his extraordinarily self-possessed tolerance for torture. These two figures display the opposing sides of the same behavioural ideal.

31 This language is even more pronounced in the short recension: 'having endured with the utmost bravery countless blows over his whole body' (μυρίας καθ' ὅλου τοῦ σώματος πληγὰς ἀνδρειότατα ὑπομείνας, *MP* 4.10 SR); 'he displayed every kind of endurance in the face of suffering and terrible agonies' (πᾶσαν ἐνδείκνυται πρὸς πόνους καὶ φρικτὰς ἀλγηδόνας καρτερίαν, *MP* 4.11 SR); 'he did not yield even before torments such as these' (μηδὲ πρὸς τὰ τοσαῦτα ἐνδιδόντος, *MP* 4.12 SR); 'The agonies the blessed one endured from this, I believe no words can express' (ἐφ' οἷς ὁποίας ἤνεγκεν ὁ μακάριος ἀλγηδόνας, πάντα λόγον ὑπεραίρειν μοι δοκῶ, *MP* 4.12 SR) and 'But since he did not yield even before this treatment, and his adversaries were now worsted and all but despairing when confronted with his superhuman endurance...' (ἀλλὰ γὰρ οὐδὲ ταῦτα ἐνδούς, ἡττημένων ἤδη καὶ μόνον οὐκ ἀπειρηκότων πρὸς τὴν ὑπὲρ ἄνθρωπον καρτερίαν αὐτοῦ τῶν ἀντιπάλων... *MP* 4.13 SR).

32 The eventual method of death merits mention. Apphianus is drowned, a capital punishment repeated on numerous occasions in *The Martyrs of Palestine* but rarely in martyr narratives outside it. Drowning by being tied in a sack together with a dog, a rooster, a monkey and a snake was the classic punishment for parricide (but written out of the law in 55BC, see Max Radin, The Lex Pompeia and the Poena Cullei, *JRS* 10 (1920), 119–130) and indeed the short recension in 5.1 tells the story, immediately after Apphianus, of the young-man Ulpian killed in precisely this manner (sans rooster and monkey). Since such a punishment is completely unmerited, it may be that we have here another subtle reference to the father-son dynamic between governor and martyr that I suggest Eusebius is trying to elicit (see below). It is also possible that drowning is simply a particularly non-agonistic method of death, at least when compared with *condemnatio ad bestias*.

* * *

The story of Theodosia in 7.1–2 employs this same rhetoric by focusing on different aspects of this character's interaction with Urban. Theodosia is an even more vulnerable character than Apphianus, on account of both her age and her gender. She is 'a certain maid from Tyre, consecrated and all-holy, who led a virgin life in the service of God, not yet full eighteen years of age' (τις ἱερὰ καὶ παναγία κόρη τῶν ἀπὸ Τύρου τῷ τοῦ θεοῦ παιδὶ παρθενευομένη, οὐδὲ ὅλων ἐτῶν ὀκτωκαίδεκα). As with Apphianus, her temperance is highlighted by her unexpected possession of it; a mere youth, and female no less. She is one of many female martyrs in Eusebius' narrative writings.[33] This phenomenon can be explained, I suggest, by Eusebius' preference for vulnerable martyrs. When Theodosia is taken to Urban, he is inexplicably personally offended and grows angry, as he did with Apphianus. We are told that 'some feeling, I know not what, came over him, and he was filled immediately with rage and fury' (ἀλλ' οὗτος οὐκ οἶδ' ὅ τι παθών … παραχρῆμα θυμοῦ καὶ λύττης ἐμπίμπλαται). As with Apphianus, this is linked to an inability to remain objective; he reacts 'as if the maid had done him the greatest injury' (ὥσπερ τὰ μέγιστα πρὸς τῆς κόρης ἠδικημένος). Again martyr and state official behave in opposing fashion.

Linguistically the contrast between state official and martyr is particularly clear here.[34] When Theodosia refuses to sacrifice, Urban is characterised as 'like a wild beast' (ὁ θηριωδέστατος). This bestial language is repeated elsewhere of Urban and other Eusebian state officials; Apphianus' torturers 'gnashed their teeth' (πρίοντες τοὺς ὀδόντας) in frustration, for example. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, in their seminal 1980 book *Metaphors We Live By*, have suggested that linguistic expressions combine in narratives to form conceptual metaphors, which determine the way we subconsciously approach a

33 For more on this see Elizabeth Clark, Eusebius on Women in Early Church History, in: Harold Attridge/Gohei Hata, eds., *Eusebius, Christianity and Judaism* (Leiden/New York: Brill, 1992), 256–269.

34 This metaphorical language is especially clear in the account of Apphianus in the short recension. There Apphianus is introduced as 'that blessed martyr, that truly guileless lamb' (τοῦ μακαρίου καὶ ὡς ἀληθῶς ἀμνοῦ ἀκάκου μάρτυρος, *MP* 4.2 SR), while Urban and his minions are subsequently described 'as if they were wild beasts' (θηρῶν δίκην ἀγρίων, *MP* 4.10 SR). It is odd that this metaphor exists in the short but not the long recension; most likely Eusebius added it into the short recension and simply neglected to incorporate it into the long recension when he reissued that text in 315/316.

topic.[35] Use of one metaphor, for example, encourages readers to ignore other potential systems of meaning which might have been pertinent.[36] Personification metaphors are especially good at determining reader response.[37] The repeated animalistic language emphasises these state officials' lack of basic human rationality. The reader is encouraged to internalise subsequent interactions between state official in these terms; as wild beast against vulnerable innocent. The behaviour of the judge prevents this being read as a normal trial or interrogation scene.[38]

As with Apphianus, the prevailing dynamic is of endurance: 'the pitiless one drove into the very bones and entrails; so perseveringly did he punish the girl, who received his tortures in silence' (ὀστέων τε αὐτῶν εἴσω δὴ καὶ σπλάγχνων ὁ ἀνηλεὴς ἐχώρει, ἐπιμόνως τὴν παῖδα τιμωρούμενος σιγῇ τὰς βασάνους δεχομένην). Eusebius emphasises her youthful beauty: 'she gave him a keen, earnest look with her eyes, and with a gentle smile upon her face (she was then in the full bloom of her beauty)' (τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ὀξὺ καὶ ἀτενὲς μβλέψασα, ὑπομειδιῶντι προσώπῳ ἐπήνθει δὲ αὐτῇ καὶ τὸ τῆς ἀκμῆς κάλλος). Like Apphianus, Theodosia is drowned after Urban perceives that torture would not break her, since 'he was become a laughing-stock to the girl' (ἑαυτὸν γέλωτα τῆς κόρης ἐνόμενον). Theodosia is characterised by unbelievable endurance despite her supposed vulnerability.

In this story though, we see another key Eusebian criterion for judging legitimate authority emerging; concern for others. Theodosia comes to the attention of the authorities because she approaches certain other Christian prisoners to request they remember her in their martyrdom. Urban's casual treatment of the Christians arraigned before him is contrasted by Theodosia's acute awareness of them. When she breaks her silence,[39] it is to express enthusiasm that she will soon be united with her fellow martyrs: 'I fare now in accordance with my prayers, since I have been judged worthy to join the company of the martyrs of God' (με πράττειν νῦν ὅτε τῶν τοῦ θεοῦ μαρτύρων κοινωνίας τυχεῖν ἠξιώθην). In Eusebius' account Theodosia's suffer-

35 George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago IL/London: University of Chicago Press, 1980 [rep. 2003]), 5–6.

36 Lakoff/Johnson, *Metaphors*, 10; see also 67.

37 Lakoff/Johnson, *Metaphors*, 33.

38 I am grateful to a conversation with Lesley Dossey for this idea. Cf. also Apphianus' label of the representatives of the state as 'drunkards' (οἷα μεθύοντας, *MP* 4.13, LR).

39 The oddity of this speech coming after Eusebius has declared that Theodosia suffered in silence may be another relic of the delay between this text's production and publication, and any editing it underwent before the latter.

ings prove of merit for other Christians. By her death she prevents the executions of those other confessors she had originally approached. It is particularly noteworthy that Eusebius links her salvific actions with her endurance.

> 'For she who as the champion of them all had taken upon herself their sufferings; by her firmness and strength of soul she had unnerved the savage judge, and thus had turned him into a coward to face those who came after her.'
>
> 'ἡ γὰρ πρόμαχος ἁπάντων τοὺς αὐτῶν ἀναδεξαμένη πόνους καὶ τὸν ὠμὸν δικαστὴν καὶ ῥώμῃ ψυχῆς παραλύσασα, δειλὸν καὶ εἰς τοὺς μετὰ ταῦτα κατεστήσατο.'
>
> (Eusebius, *The Martyrs of Palestine* Long Recension 7.2)

It is precisely by her 'firmness' (εὐτονίᾳ) and 'strength of soul' (ῥώμῃ ψυχῆς) that Theodosia ends this interaction (παραλύσασα) with an official described only as 'savage' (ὠμὸν). It is her calm endurance in the face of a bestial adversary which saves the lives of her fellow confessors. Self-control and an ability to care for others are combined here, and as evident in Theodosia as they are absent in Urban.

* * *

The story of the martyrdom of Pamphilus and his companions in chapter 11 is the other episode of great length in *The Martyrs of Palestine*. By 310, when these events supposedly occurred, Urban had been replaced by Firmilian, but there is no noticeable difference in their characters or behaviour.[40] Both conform to the same Eusebian literary typos of illegitimate authority. Firmilian is first described in this story as follows: '...the judge was convulsed with anger and downright rage, and, being at his wit's end, contrived devices of various kinds against them, that he might not be worsted' (ὁ δικαστὴς ἀγανακτικῶς καὶ μάλα ὀργίλως σφαδάζων καὶ τὸν λογισμὸν ἀπορούμενος, ποικίλας, ὡς ἂν μὴ ἡττηθείη, τὰς κατ' αὐτῶν ἐπενόει μηχανάς, *MP* 11.1n, LR). His rage is emphasised by strong language: he physically spasms (σφαδάζων) through irritation (ἀγανακτικῶς) and rage (ὀργίλως). Like Urban, Firmilian is characterised by his inability to control his emotions, and his treatment of those arraigned before him is also

40 When Firmilian first appears at the start of chapter 8 Eusebius introduces him as 'Firmilian, who at that time had succeeded to the province of Urban. Now he was a man far from peaceable. Indeed in ferocity he surpassed his predecessor, for he had been a soldier in the wars, and he was experienced in war and bloodshed' (*MP* 8.1 LR, extant only in the Syriac translation).

motivated by his rage and personal affront. As with Urban, the contrasting qualities of the martyrs before him serve to highlight Firmilian's own moral failings. In this story though the role of concern for others in Eusebius' rhetoric of legitimate and illegitimate authority (touched upon in his picture of Theodosia) is drawn out further.

Pamphilus was Eusebius' own mentor, and we know from the *Ecclesiastical History* that they had written the majority of a *Defence of Origen* together after Pamphilus was imprisoned, which Eusebius finished alone.[41] In many ways the story of Pamphilus' martyrdom is the pinnacle of this text, but it is noteworthy that Pamphilus dies as part of a group, and his fellow confessors are afforded equal attention.[42] Their combined ability to endure novel and diverse sufferings is marked from the start (again Eusebius own presence as narrator is made explicit).

> 'the conflict which we beheld, whose story we are now to tell, was without parallel in our experience, comprising as it did, all in one, every bodily age and mental development, with differences of life and conduct, and is adorned with manifold forms of tortures and the varied crowns of perfect martyrdom.'
>
> 'τὸν περὶ ὧν ὁ λόγος ἀγῶνα σπανιώτατον ὧν ἡμεῖς ἔγνωμεν, ἱστορήσαμεν, ἀθρόως ἐν αὐτῷ πᾶν εἶδος ἡλικιῶν τε σώματος καὶ ψυχῶν ἀγωγῆς βίου τε καὶ ἀναστροφῆς διαφόρου περιειληφότα βασάνων τε ποικίλοις εἴδεσι καὶ τοῖς κατὰ τὸ τέλειον μαρτύριον ἐνηλλαγμένοις στεφάνοις κεκοσμημένον' (*MP* 11.1a–b LR).

The characteristics of the group contribute to an overall picture of Eusebius' preferred conception of martyrdom, all in contrast to the figure of the state official opposing them. The lengthiest description of Pamphilus indicates his key characteristics for Eusebius. A well-brought up pagan, once educated in Berytus he progressed to the study of Scripture (exactly the same upbringing as Apphianus). The core of his character though is his concern for those around him. As we are being told of Firmilian's mistreatment of others, we are being introduced to our main protagonist who always acts altruistically (as, Eusebius notes, the etymology of his name Πάμ-φιλος suggests). His identity is literally bound into his regard for others: 'In fact he gave

41 *EH* 6.33.4. The first book alone of the *Defence* survives in the Latin translation of Rufinus.

42 Commenting on a large group of martyrs in brief individual detail is also a favourite Eusebian technique, and is repeated elsewhere in his writing. See e.g. *EH* 6.4.1–6.5.1; 6.39.1–42.1; 7.12.1; 8.6.1–6. Also interesting in this regard is the supposedly 2nd century AD letter of the churches in Lyons and Vienne to the church in Smyrna, extant only in book 5 of the *Ecclesiastical History* (5.1.1–3.3).

away what came to him from his fathers, and distributed it all among the naked, the maimed and the poor, while he himself lived in poverty' (ἀποδόμενος γέ τοι τὰ εἰς αὐτὸν ἐκ προγόνων ἥκοντα γυμνοῖς, πηροῖς καὶ πένησιν τὰ πάντα διένειμεν, αὐτὸς δὲ ἐν ἀκτήμονι διῆγε βίῳ', *MP* 11.2–3).[43] Pamphilus' selfless treatment of others only highlights further Firmilian's brutality.

The stress upon the kindness Pamphilus displayed ('dear and friendly to all', πάντων… φίλος τε καὶ προσήγορος) and his treatment of the naked, maimed and poor is noteworthy, and found repeated in various forms for each of his companions. Martyrs' treatment of the weak in the community is a characterisation found repeatedly in Eusebius but far less frequently before him. After Pamphilus we are introduced to Valens, an old man well-versed in the Scriptures and a deacon of the church of Aelia (*MP* 11.4 LR), and then to Paul of Jamnia, a man described as 'hasty in action and fervent in spirit' (θερμουργότατος καὶ τῷ πνεύματι ζέων ἀνήρ, *MP* 11.5 LR), and about whom we are subsequently told least.[44] Next of the twelve to be described are five Egyptians arrested at the gates of Caesarea and brought before Firmilian together with Pamphilus and the others. As with Apphianus and Theodosia, their brief responses to the judge's questions (*MP* 11.8–12) produce the same reaction of frustration and anger in Firmilian as in Urban: 'The judge, on the other hand, was puzzled and shook with impatience...' (ὁ δὲ δικαστὴς ἀπορούμενος ἐσφάδαζεν, *MP* 11.12 LR).[45] Firmilian's impatience is highlighted against the calm responses of the martyrs.

The next martyr marks the start of a series of stories carefully constructed by Eusebius to highlight Firmilian's failure to elicit willing obedience from his subordinates. His failing is deliberately contrasted with Pamphilus' success. As Firmilian sentences Pamphilus and the others to decapitation, Porphyry, a young servant from Pamphilus' own household, shouts out from the crowd and demands the bodies for burial. Porphyry is mentioned briefly at the start of the chapter as one who 'outwardly was a servant of Pamphilus, but in affection differed

43 In fact, Pamphilus' actual death is paid very little attention, a fact well noted in Verheyden, *Pain and Glory*. I intend to treat this more fully in a future publication, but I suggest that for Eusebius Pamphilus' martyrdom is less significant than this other achievements. This same is true of Eusebius' treatment of Origen, for example.

44 Cf. the relative lack of attention paid to Aedesius, Apphianus' hot-headed brother.

45 The judge is said not to understand the martyrs' reference to Jerusalem. The oddity of a Roman governor not knowing the local name of such a prominent city should encourage us further in reading these stories as literary constructions as much as historical reminiscences.

nothing from a brother, or rather a veritable son, and never failed to imitate his master in everything' (τὸ μὲν δοκεῖν τοῦ Παμφίλου γεγονὼς οἰκέτης, διαθέσει γε μὴν ἀδελφοῦ καὶ μᾶλλον γνησίου παιδὸς διενηνοχὼς οὐδὲν ἢ ἐλλείπων τῆς πρὸς τὸν δεσπότην κατὰ πάντα μιμήσεως, *MP* 11.1f LR). At the moment of his fateful interruption in 11.15, he is described again in similar terms. As with Apphianus and Theodosia, his youth is emphasised (οὐδ' ὅλων ὀκτωκαίδεκα ἐτῶν) and that 'for sobriety and manners [he] was beyond all praise' (σωφροσύνης δὲ ἕνεκα καὶ τρόπων πάντα καλύπτων ἐγκώμια). His relationship to Pamphilus is again likened to that between a son and a father ('a true nursling of Pamphilus', Παμφίλου γνησίου παιδὸς). Like Apphianus, it seems he too had been Pamphilus' pupil, since he was 'skilled in the art of penmanship…as we might expect from one trained under such a man (καλλιγραφικῆς ἐπιστήμης ἔμπειρος…ὡς οἷα ὑπὸ τηλικῷδε ἀνδρὶ συνησκημένος, *MP* 11.16 LR). Though technically Pamphilus' servant, Eusebius' description makes him as much a student and a son.

Pamphilus' positive relationship with Porphyry is contrasted with Firmilian's reaction to the boy. After Porphyry speaks, we read in 11.16 that 'the judge, who was not a human being, but a wild beast or more savage than any wild beast, neither admitted the reasonableness of the request nor made allowance for the young man's age' (ὁ δὲ οὐκ ἄνθρωπος, ἀλλὰ θὴρ καὶ θηρίου παντὸς ἀγριώτερος, μήτε τῆς αἰτήσεως τὸ εὔλογον ἀποδεξάμενος μήτε τῷ τῆς ἡλικίας ἀπονείμας νέῳ συγγνώμην; *MP* 11.18 LR).' It is Porphyry, the youngest martyr, who suffers the most gruesome torture, and for whom Firmilian's 'mercilessness and inhumanity knew no respite' (παράμονον δὲ τὸ ἀνηλεὲς καὶ ἀπάνθρωπον κεκτημένος). What is more, we are told explicitly that Firmilian's actions are bestial (θὴρ καὶ θηρίου παντὸς ἀγριώτερος) precisely because he did not take into account the age of the boy (τῷ τῆς ἡλικίας… νέῳ; *MP* 11.16 LR) and act appropriately. This dynamic highlights this aspect of Eusebius' rhetoric of legitimate and illegitimate authority.

A subsequent martyr completes the image of Firmilian's moral failing. Theodolus, another of the twelve, is a servant in Firmilian's own household. His treatment by his own master encourages direct comparison with the shining example of Pamphilus and his servant Porphyry. Furthermore it is Theodolus who angers Firmilian most. Spotted greeting another Christian with a kiss in 11.24, 'he was brought before his master, whom he infuriated to anger more than did the others, and received the same martyrdom as the Saviour in His Passion; for he was delivered to the cross' (προσάγεται τῷ δεσπότῃ, μᾶλλόν τε

αὐτὸν τῶν ἄλλων ἐπ' ὀργὴν ὀξύνας, ταὐτὸν τοῦ σωτηρίου μαρτύριον πάθους σταυρῷ παραδοθεὶς ἀνεδέξατο). These stories all play with these interwoven hierarchical relationships, and their relative treatment of dependents condemns Firmilian in the reader's eyes at the same time as it elevates Pamphilus. They are judged by the same criteria of moral authority – their capacity for self-control and its effect on their interactions with their dependents.

One final character makes clear the direction of Eusebius' thought. Seleucus is a Cappadocian ex-soldier known for his physical excellence: 'For in stature and bodily strength, and size and vigour, he far excelled his fellow-soldiers, so that his appearance was a matter of common talk, and his whole form was admired on account of its size and symmetrical proportions' (καὶ αὐτῇ ἡλικίᾳ καὶ ῥώμῃ σώματος μεγέθει τε καὶ ἰσχύος ἀρετῇ πλεῖστον ὅσον τοὺς λοιποὺς ἐπλεονέκτει, καὶ τὴν πρόσοψιν δὲ αὐτὴν περίβλεπτος ἦν τοῖς πᾶσι τό τε πᾶν εἶδος ἀξιάγαστος μεγέθους ἕνεκα καὶ εὐμορφίας, *MP* 11.21 LR). However, Eusebius makes it clear that though Seleucus was a perfect specimen of physical masculinity, it was not his strength, size or vigour that qualified him for martyrdom.

> '…as if he were their father and guardian he showed himself a bishop and patron of destitute orphans and defenceless widows and of those who were distressed with penury or sickness. It is likely that on this account he was deemed worthy of an extraordinary call to martyrdom by God, who rejoices in such things more than in the smoke and blood of sacrifices.'
>
> '…ὀρφανῶν ἐρήμων καὶ χηρῶν ἀπεριστάτων τῶν τε ἐν πενίαις καὶ ἀσθενείαις ἀπερριμμένων ἐπίσκοπος ὥσπερ καὶ ἐπίκουρος πατρὸς καὶ κηδεμόνος δίκην ἀναπέφανται· ὅθεν δὴ εἰκότων πρὸς τοῦ τοῖς τοιοῖσδε μᾶλλον τῶν διὰ καπνοῦ καὶ αἵματος θυσιῶν χαίροντος θεοῦ τῆς κατὰ τὸ μαρτύριον παραδόξου κλήσεως ἠξιώθη' (*MP* 11.22 LR).

It is his pastoral care for the vulnerable in the Christian community (orphans, widows, the poor and sick) that marks him as a likely martyr, not his suitability for conflict, as we might expect. Seleucus provides perhaps the best example of this aspect of Eusebius' reshaping of the figure of the martyr. He is the latest example of a pattern we have found repeated throughout *The Martyrs of Palestine*. But to understand why Eusebius employs this particular rhetoric in his characterisations we must first understand those conceptions of authority which would have been more familiar to him and his audience.

3. Traditional Conceptions of Authority Figures

We have observed a repeated tendency in Eusebius' martyr stories in *The Martyrs of Palestine* to characterise state officials by their lack of self-control, and their failure to engage correctly or successfully with subordinates because of it. By contrast, the martyrs whom they treat so badly are marked by their remarkable demonstrations of precisely those characteristics. To fully understand the reasons behind this deliberate rhetorical strategy we must understand the classic conceptions of the authority of the state official and the role of the martyr against which Eusebius is reacting.

By the time Eusebius picked up his pen martyr narratives were already a feature of the early Christian literary corpus. Though earlier martyr stories were written at a diversity of time and locale that warns against over-generalisation, nevertheless recent scholarship has increasingly read martyr acts thought to date from the 2nd and 3rd centuries as the documents of a Christianity which conceived of itself as resistance movement.[46] These accounts of the trials and deaths of Christians sought to appropriate the cultural dynamics of the Roman arena. Since Foucault's theories of authority and humility appeared in 1977 a series of publications has outlined how the punishment of criminals in such a public setting was supposed to both humiliate the criminal and further establish the authority of the punishing state.[47] As Maureen Tilley argued in a seminal article, the Christian martyr's ability to endure torture and subsequent embrace of death removed this element of humiliation and so implicitly challenged the authority of the state.[48] Kate Cooper has pinpointed how this challenge worked. Since the martyr's declaration of the superiority of Christianity was

46 Judith Perkins has suggested that this literature was produced at the same time as, and as an alternative to, a competing corpus of Greek elite literature seeking different solutions to the perceived similar problems of living under the Roman hegemony. See e.g. Judith Perkins, *The Suffering Self: Pain and Narrative Representation in the Early Christian Era* (London/New York: Routledge, 1995). See also id., *Roman Imperial Identities in the Early Christian Era* (London/New York: Routledge, 2009).

47 Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Pantheon, 1977). See also e.g. David Potter, Martyrdom as spectacle, in: Ruth Scodel, ed., *Theater and Society in the Classical World* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993), 53–88; Carlin Barton, The Scandal of the Arena, *Representations* 27 (1989), 1–36; Katherine Coleman, Fatal charades: Roman executions staged as mythological enactments, *JRS* 80 (1990), 44–73; Brent Shaw, Body/Power/Identity: Passions of the Martyrs, *JECS* 4 (1996), 269–312.

48 Maureen Tilley, The ascetic body and the (un)making of the world of the martyr, *JAAR* 59 (1991), 467–479;

vindicated by the persistence of his/her claim to truth under torture (the Roman method of testing truth claims), the competing claim of the official, of the superiority of the Roman hegemony, came under scrutiny instead.[49] These martyr narratives were designed to question the legitimacy of the whole Roman enterprise, and ultimately invalidate it.

For this reason in numerous 2nd and 3rd century martyr acts the focus is upon the agonistic contest between martyr and governor, where martyrs are conceived as powerful and charismatic competitors in a violent contest, and the state officials are remarkably neutral figures, serving simply as mouthpieces for the Roman establishment.[50] The defeat of the latter is thus the defeat of the ideal of the Roman Empire as a whole. It is this central dynamic that Eusebius reshapes in his own 4th century martyr narratives, where the martyr becomes an increasingly vulnerable figure in contrast to the indeterminate rage of the Roman judge.

Eusebius' literary characterisations also adopt and adapt basic conceptions of Roman official authority. I turn now to consider the scholarship of the last century which has changed our understanding of how the Romans envisaged the Roman official. I will discuss here the ideal qualities both of the Roman judge and the Roman political leader, since Christians in martyr narratives are most commonly tried under the so-called *cognitio ex ordine* process, and so are judged by Roman proconsuls.[51] These individuals play twin roles, since they act as legal judges for this particular case, but as governors are also local representatives of the emperor, and so embody his authority as a Roman leader.

The authority of the ideal *iudex* for the Romans was primarily marked by self-control and rationality. Jill Harries notes that the ideal judge acts fairly and must avoid cruel or threatening behaviour.[52] The exercise of authority can include ordering violent action if the situation demands, but it must be done without emotion, and the judge himself should remain remote. Harries notes that in late antique legal codes, if it could be demonstrated that he had acted in anger a judge could be

49 Kate Cooper, The Voice of the Victim: Gender, Representation and Early Christian Martyrdom, *The Bulletin of the John Rylands Library of Manchester* 80.3 (1998), 147–157.

50 Jill Harries, Constructing the Judge: Judicial accountability and the culture of criticism in late antiquity, in: Richard Miles, ed., *Constructing Identity in Late Antiquity* (London/New York: Routledge, 1999), 225, notes the remarkably neutral treatment of Roman officials in 2nd and 3rd century Christian martyr literature.

51 See e.g. Gary Bisbee, *Pre-Decian Acts of Martyrs and Commentarii*, HDR 22 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988).

52 Harries, Constructing the Judge, 219.

held liable for acting unjustly.[53] William Harris too in his 2002 survey of anger in the ancient world notes that control of temper was integral to the cumulative picture of positive official authority figures gleaned from imperial sources.[54] Though matters become more complicated in late antiquity, self-control remained the prime marker of authority for a judge, and in the eastern half of the empire at least the major component of "manliness".[55] This is intimately tied to the image of the Emperor propagated by Augustus: 'From Augustus' time onwards, the positive or negative character of a Roman ruler – and of a potential ruler – could be signalled by his control over his anger, or the lack of it.'[56] Most recently, Leanne Bablitz has drawn attention to the passivity of the Roman judge: his role is primarily as listener. If a contest occurs, it is between the defendants or between advocates – the judge is not supposed to be part of the courtroom "struggle".[57]

When we turn to the ideal image of the Roman leader, however, a further element becomes important. We can only understand the moral authority of the ideal Roman leader if we appreciate the close connections between this figure and the Roman *pater*. The classic statement of this link is Weinstock's 1971 *Divus Julius*. Weinstock traced the link between parenthood and political authority back to the award of the title *parens patriae* to Cicero. This title was later taken by Augustus, who also subsequently received the title *pater patriae* (which became standard for many successive emperors). Weinstock argued that the title was an expression of the emperor's unlimited political power, since he had complete authority over his subjects, much as the Roman father did over his son.[58] Recent scholarship has explored how

53 Harries, Constructing the Judge, 222.

54 William Harris, *Restraining Rage: The ideology of anger control in classical antiquity* (Cambridge MA./London: Harvard University Press, 2001).

55 For further discussion see e.g. Lin Foxhall/John Salmon, eds., *Thinking Men: Masculinity and its Self-Representation in the Classical Tradition* (London/New York: Routledge, 1998); id., eds., *When Men Were Men: Masculinity, Power and Identity in Classical Antiquity*, Leicester-Nottingham Studies in Ancient Society 8 (London/New York: Routledge, 1998); Joseph Roisman, *The Rhetoric of Manhood: Masculinity in the Attic Orators* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); Lesley Dossey, *Wife Beating and Manliness in Late Antiquity*, PaP 199 (2008), 33.

56 Harris, *Restraining Rage*, 248; see also 111–116; 220–221, 241 and 261.

57 Leanne Bablitz, *Actors and Audience in the Roman Courtroom* (London/New York: Routledge, 2007), 89–90. Entry to the *album iudicum*, the list of judges, was in part dependent on a character examination, but the details of this have unfortunately not survived (ibid. 92-3).

58 Stefan Weinstock, *Divus Julius* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 200–205. Weinstock does note in passing the importance of the affectionate side to the father in the

Augustus' reforms and self-stylising encouraged a familial model of government.[59] Beth Severy, for example, notes that as Augustus' rule progressed there developed 'a new way of conceiving of Augustus' role in the state – as the father of a Roman family.'[60] Leader and father were intertwined in the Roman imagination.

However, this recent scholarship has had to take into account a sea change in our understanding of the Roman father itself. Weinstock believed the core ideology of the Roman *pater* to be his absolute authority over his household and the obedience due to him. The work of Richard Saller in particular however has revealed that the authority of the *pater familias* was based as much on his positive treatment of his wife, children and other dependents as his ability to force them to obey.[61] Ideal paternal authority was thus based around the ability to elicit obedience in reciprocal, affectionate relationships. In particular, the Roman father should have no need of recourse to violence against any member of his household except small children.[62] Saller's suggestions have been largely accepted by subsequent scholarship on the

emperor's love for his people, but concentrates on the authoritarian implications and the unsymmetrical nature of the relationship now implied. See also Andreas Alföldi, *Der Vater des Vaterlandes im Römischen Denken* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1971), 48–49 – for the assertion that clemency was one of the virtues of the parens but not the most important one.

59 Beth Severy, *Augustus and the Family at the Birth of the Roman Empire* (London/New York: Routledge, 2003), 158–186.

60 Severy, *Augustus and the Family*, 61.

61 For this classic view see e.g. Lewis Henry Morgan, *Ancient Society* (London: MacMullen & Co., 1877), London; more recently Paul Veyne, *A History of Private Life. From Pagan Rome to Byzantium* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1987). Saller's critique built on the earlier questioning of John Crook, Patria Potestas, *CQ* n.s. 17 (1967), 113–122. His own publications here are extensive; see e.g. Richard Saller and Brent Shaw, Tombstones and Roman Family Relations in the Principate. Civilians, Soldiers and Slaves, *JRS* 74 (1984), 124–156; Richard Saller, Familia, Domus, and the Roman Conception of the Family, *Phoenix* 38 (1984), 336–355; id., Patria potestas and the Stereotype of the Roman Family, *Continuity and Change* 1 (1986), 7–22; id., Slavery and the Roman Family, *Slavery and Abolition* 8 (1987), 65–87; id., Pietas, Obligation, and Authority in the Roman Family, in: Peter Kneissl/Volker Losemann, eds., *Alte Geschichte und Wissenschaftsgeschichte: Festschrift für Karl Christ zum 65. Geburtstag* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1988), 392–410; id., Roman Kinship: Structure and Sentiment, in: Beryl Rawson/Paul Weaver, eds., *The Roman Family in Italy: Status, sentiment, space* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 7–34.

62 See especially Richard Saller, Corporal Punishment, Authority and Obedience in the Roman Household, in: Beryl Rawson, ed., *Marriage, Divorce and Children in Ancient Rome* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991 [repr. 2004]), 157–164.

Roman family[63], and though the nature of Saller's evidence means his own conclusions only hold until the end of the 2nd century, scholars extending his investigations into late antiquity have found that in the Greek East at least his conclusions remain valid.[64]

This fundamental shift in our conception of the Roman father's authority has impacted upon our understanding of the use of paternal imagery in describing Roman leaders.[65] Eva Marie Lassen in an excellent article on metaphorical use of Roman family imagery notes that in Cicero or Pliny's treatments of the father-leader synergy it is specifically the father's temperance that is associated with the ideal official.[66] Of the paternal characteristics attributed to Augustus, the most common was paternal *clementia*, and this virtue featured prominently in early imperial "propaganda". It is precisely this ability of the Roman father to elicit obedience based on mutual affection rather than violent discipline, fore-grounded by Saller, that we find most commonly utilised in contemporary discussions of recommended behaviour for Roman officials. This attitude towards one's dependents is bound up

63 See e.g. Suzanne Dixon, *The Roman Family* (Baltimore/London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992).

64 Antti Arjava has confirmed that legally at least 'There can be no doubt that patria potestas continued to be the cornerstone of Roman family law, and also an essential element of the law of property and inheritance', Antti Arjava, *Paternal Power in Late Antiquity*, *JRS* 88 (1998), 164. Emiel Eyben, Fathers and Sons, in: Beryl Rawson, ed., *Marriage, Divorce and Children in Ancient Rome* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991 [repr. 2004]), 114–143, and Peter Garnsey, Sons, Slaves – and Christians, in: Beryl Rawson/Paul Weaver, *The Roman Family in Italy*, 101–121 agree in essence that concrete attitudes towards the distinction between sons and slaves did not change, although Garnsey maintains that metaphorical use of the language related to them did. For an evolution in attitudes towards violence in particular in the West see e.g. Theodore De Bruyn, Flogging a Son: The Emergence of the pater flagellans in Latin Christian Discourse, *JECS* 7 (1999), 249–290.

65 'By integrating the family metaphors – the metaphors of father and son in particular – into the political and administrative system, some of the attitudes and ideals connected with the family were transferred to the attitudes and ideals connected with certain public offices' (Eva Marie Lassen, The Roman Family: Ideal and Metaphor, in: Halvor Moxnes, ed., *Constructing Early Christian Families: Family as Social Reality and Metaphor* (London/New York: Routledge, 1997), 111).

66 When Cicero gained the title parens patriae, it was specifically for his salvific actions in saving Rome from Catiline's conspiracy, and various military commanders were also called pater in recognition of their acts on behalf of the people. When Octavian gained the title in 45/44 BC, the official reason was because he had saved the country from civil war. The same is true of the eventual awarding of the title pater patriae; though he was not given the title officially until 2 BC, there are extant coins from 20 BC where he was proclaimed *conservator* and *parens*: "SPQR PARENTI... CONS(ervatori) SUO"; see Lassen, *The Roman Family*, 113.

with the good leader's self-control. [67] Harris observes that the good ruler should restrain his anger towards his subjects just as the good father curbs his anger towards wife and children.[68] It is a self-control that engenders such calm, reciprocal dealings with one's dependents that marks the ideal Roman father and, by extension, Roman leader.

This connection between Roman leader and Roman father has great significance in literary assessments of authoritative figures in the antique world. If the qualities of the good leader are those of the good father, it follows that a leader can be judged by his ability to demonstrate the characteristics of the good Roman *pater*. In her 1992 article, Kate Cooper, building on Helen North's concept of a "rhetoric of *sophrosune*" and Jack Winkler's use of that motif, explains the need for modern scholars to appreciate literary manipulations of a rhetoric of (in)temperance in antique descriptions of a man's domestic affairs as a way of assessing his suitability for public office.[69] In a society characterised by "zero-sum competition" for positions of authority, casting aspersions on the domestic capabilities of others, and defending and advertising your own abilities in that sphere was crucial.[70]

In a more recent article Cooper considers the rhetorical implications of Saller's picture of a reciprocal relationship between parent and child.[71] In explaining how public authority of Roman officials was dependent on their cultivation and performance of private power, she emphasises that a man's claim to legitimate authority was grounded in the public demonstration of his ability to elicit loyal obedience from

67 I note myself for example Juvenal, commenting: "When you finally enter your long-awaited province as its Governor, bridle and limit your anger and your greed, too, have some sympathy for the impoverished provincials" ('Expectata diu tandem provincia cum te rectorem accipiet, pone irae frena modumque pone et avaritiae, miserere inopum sociorum...', *Satires* 8.87–89); transl. by Susanna Morton Braund, *Juvenal and Persius*, LCL 91 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).

68 Harris, *Restraining Rage*, 316.

69 Kate Cooper, Insinuations of Womanly Influence: An Aspect of the Christianization of the Roman Aristocracy, *JRS* 82 (1992), 150–164; citing Helen North, *Sophrosyne. Self-Knowledge and Restraint in Classical Antiquity* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966) and Jack Winkler, *The Constraints of Desire: The Anthropology of Sex and Gender in Ancient Greece* (London/New York: Routledge, 1990).

70 Cooper, Insinuations, 152. See also id., *The Virgin and the Bride* (Cambridge, MA./London: Harvard University Press, 1996) for a discussion of how in ancient literature sexual temperance emerges as an index by which to measure the claims to power of male protagonists (12-13), which in turn can provide the means by which a group can claim the allegiance of new members by indicating the moral superiority of its leadership over and against the leadership of other groups (17).

71 Kate Cooper, Closely Watched Households: Visibility, Exposure, and Private Power in the Roman domus, *PaP* 197 (2007), 7.

dependents in his own household. Cooper hypothesises that a desire to publicise the extent of a man's temperate authority in his private life in order to imply something about his ability to wield authority in public lies behind the characterisation of protagonists in many ancient writings.

Eusebius' own education and prolific reading habits are well known. I suggest he had a keen awareness of the value of rhetorical representation. The evidence from *The Martyrs of Palestine* above reveals a keen interest in manipulating depictions of a man's self-control and his treatment of dependents. It is precisely for a public inability to elicit willing obedience from their dependents that Eusebius condemns Urban and Firmilian, and why they resort to violent means. It is also precisely this quality that Pamphilus demonstrates so effortlessly. It is no coincidence that Eusebius repeatedly constructs martyrs and state officials around this rhetoric of the temperate *pater*; he is guiding his late antique readers in their assessments of them and their respective claims to power.

4. Literary Manipulations of Traditional Conceptions of Authority

The true aim of Eusebius' steps towards a new stylisation of martyrs and state officials becomes clearer in the light of this scholarship. His portraits of martyrs and state officials are deliberately constructed as polar opposites to demonstrate Urban and Firmilian's failure to elicit willing obedience from the martyrs. The bestial rage of Urban, Firmilian and their attendees demonstrates a complete lack of precisely that self-control which defines Apphianus, Theodosia and the companions of Pamphilus. Apphianus is self-controlled under torture, a process designed to wear away his self-possession, while Urban unexpectedly rages in a manner inappropriate to his age and station. Theodosia as a mere girl demonstrates that temperance which would mark Urban as a legitimate bearer of authority, but which he fails to demonstrate. This is a novel form of the inversion-motif found in earlier martyr narratives.

A similar inversion marks Eusebius' second shift in characterisation. The state officials' failure to elicit obedience from the martyrs is emphasised by their failure to treat them with the reciprocal respect with which good Roman men approached their dependents. The martyrs, on the other hand, do demonstrate this awareness of those around them, since Eusebius concentrates more than his literary predecessors on the martyrs' concern for others. Apphianus shows concern for

Urban's spiritual well-being, and despite Theodosia's initial request for help from other martyrs, in the event it is her martyrdom that saves their lives. Many of those surrounding Pamphilus are marked by their concern for others. Again, as with their respective demonstrations of self-control, the contrast between martyr and official is constructed to illustrate the failing of the latter as a good Roman *pater*, and thus as a good Roman leader.

Eusebius' genius is in constructing narrative scenarios which bring out the domestic overtones of these encounters, and enforce for the reader the illegitimacy of the state official's behaviour. What is implicit in the cases of the young martyrs Apphianus and Theodosia (well-educated and virginal respectively – perfect Roman children) before the powerful Roman man Urban is taken a stage further in the brilliant construction of Porphyry's confrontation with Firmilian. It is when Firmilian is presented with Porphyry, the youngest martyr and the one who most easily fits a father-son paradigm that Eusebius drives home the image of the wrathful, out-of-control governor. This comes immediately after we have been told about Pamphilus' treatment of the boy (his servant and pupil) as if he were his father. Pamphilus in treating his servant like his son elicits a public demonstration of loyal obedience which Firmilian cannot do, either from Porphyry or from his own servant, Theodolus. We cannot help but judge Firmilian next to Pamphilus. This is a clear example of Eusebius' subtle manipulation of the intertwining threads between the Roman authority figure and the Roman *pater*. Here most clearly the atmosphere of the *domus* is imposed on the courtroom.

In *The Martyrs of Palestine* then, Eusebius' first narrative about past interactions between church and state, we see the beginnings of new characterisations of both martyrs and their opponents. This takes the shape of a novel form of that inversion motif characteristic of earlier martyr literature, but based now around a manipulation of the connected themes of rational self-control and care of one's dependents. This novelty is motivated by Eusebius unique historical position.

5. Historical Motivations for Literary Manipulations of Authority Figures

In these fragments of the long recension of *The Martyrs of Palestine* the Roman governor is no longer the rational figure simply carrying out his job, characteristic of earlier martyr literature. He has become instead a feral beast incapable of controlling his emotions, unable to elicit willing

obedience from his subordinates and thus unsuitable for public office. In addition and as a consequence, the martyrs are increasingly defined by their calm self-control and thoughtful interactions with other martyrs and the wider Christian community. We are witnessing here the beginning of a reworking of the medium of the martyr narrative.

These rhetorical manipulations are more than literary sophism. In an empire of such size and with a relatively small administrative network, the effects of literary depictions of authority figures could be far-reaching.[72] Eusebius' literary manipulation of his audience in assessing martyrs and officials will have influenced subsequent generations' actual attitudes. Eusebius was the first prominent writer of the peace of the church after Diocletian's Great Persecution ended, and the writer most associated with the Constantinian revolution. It is by reference to this 4th century context that I would point to the beginnings of an explanation for Eusebius' literary tactics. I suggest that he saw one of his tasks as a historian in this key moment as the re-appropriation of certain symbolic figures of preceding centuries for this new order where church and state could conceivably be aligned.

In their description of an inversion of authority, Eusebius' martyr narratives echo those of the preceding centuries. In his martyr narratives, as there, the martyrs emerge successful, and the authority of their opponents disintegrates. But Eusebius' consistent use of the particular rhetoric of the temperate Roman *pater* means that the consequences in his narratives are very different. While it is true that the Christian figures emerge as better models of authority, they no longer do so as exemplars of resistance. Their authority is not that of Christianity conceived over and above that of the Roman Empire. Instead (and this is Eusebius' true goal) they acquire precisely that type of authority which the state officials fail to demonstrate; the authority of the good Roman leader and *pater*. Their persistent self-control and positive treatment of dependents marks them as the true inheritors of the Roman ideal of legitimate authority. In short, they succeed because they embody the ideals of the Roman state better than its legal representatives do.

It is no coincidence that the figures of greatest authority in *The Martyrs of Palestine* are the most senior Christians, Pamphilus and

72 See e.g. Cameron, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire*, 140: 'Since everything conspired to make of the fourth century a time when rhetoric did indeed convey power, Christians needed to make it their own'.

Seleucus.[73] Their authority is based on their pastoral activities, and in the case of Pamphilus his extensive education and learning as well (an education it is worth noting that Apphianus and Porphyry share; they are all examples of the Christian *literati*). These inheritors of true Roman authority are not the volatile, resistant martyrs of earlier literature; they are the educated, altruistic Christian elite. In *The Martyrs of Palestine* we see the beginnings of a transfer of authority – ideal Roman authority – from state officials to the Christian clergy.

Eusebius' motivation for the rabid characterisation of the Roman state officials is explicable in this light. In pre-Eusebian martyr literature Roman officials are good representatives of the system, and so their failure is a failure of the whole imperial criminal justice system and the ideology it supports. Eusebian officials, however, are unfit for public office and thus simply bad representatives of the state. Counter-intuitively, the state mechanisms themselves are damaged less by Eusebius' martyr stories, since they condemn examples of bad authority figures of preceding centuries only, not the viability of the Roman empire as a whole. As the mechanisms of the Roman administration increasingly worked in the church's favour, Eusebius would have had less and less use for a dynamic between martyrs and officials that undermined those mechanisms. Instead, he constructs narratives where those mechanisms remain intact but the Roman authority to operate them is transferred from government officials, who proved individually unworthy, to Christian clergy, who do demonstrate the necessary *romanitas*.[74] Eusebius' martyr narratives are less concerned with the triumph of the Christian martyr over the Roman state official than with the transfer of true Roman authority and the right to govern from those officials to their successors as the new Roman men, the Christian clergy.

73 Lawlor and Oulton claim in their commentary that Seleucus must be a member of the clergy, but since his rank is not stated they hypothesise that he may have had a role connected with the care of widows (*Eusebius* II, 332).

74 For the connections between the roles of Roman magistrates and Christian bishops see most recently Kate Cooper, Christianity, Private Power, and the Law from Decius to Constantine: The Minimalist View, *JECS* 19 (2011), 327–343, esp. 332.

PETER GEMEINHARDT

Vita Antonii oder *Passio Antonii*?

Biographisches Genre und martyrologische Topik in der ersten Asketenvita

1. Einleitung

Der Begriff des Martyriums hat das Potenzial, zu ganz unterschiedlichen Zeiten und unter wechselnden Bedingungen als Interpretament des authentischen christlichen Glaubens zu fungieren. Man könnte dies an zahlreichen Stationen der Geschichte des Christentums bis zu den Märtyrern des 20. Jahrhunderts und zum Sterben des jüngst selig gesprochenen Papstes Johannes Paul II. nachzeichnen.[1] Neben dieser Kontinuität in der Vielfalt gibt es allerdings in der Geschichte des Christentums auch Zeiträume, in denen sich signifikante Transformationen von Gegenständen und Begriffen vollziehen – so auch in Bezug auf das Verständnis des Martyriums. Hierbei zählt das 4. Jahrhundert gewiss zu den entscheidenden Epochen. Daher möchte ich den Blick auf die spätantiken Quellen richten und fragen, welche Entwicklung die Vorstellung des Martyriums in dieser Zeit genommen hat und welche Erfahrungen nun damit in Verbindung gebracht wurden, konkret: wie es dazu gekommen ist, dass auch jemand, der nicht gewaltsam gestorben war, als genuiner Nachahmer Christi angesehen werden konnte. Dass in der Zeit nach der großen Christenverfolgung unter Diokletian und seinen Mitregenten das Verständnis des Martyriums als *Blut-* (wieder) in Richtung einer *Glaubens*zeugenschaft geöffnet wurde, ist nicht strittig. Ob aber die Asketen des 4. Jahrhunderts einfach das Erbe der Märtyrer der Verfolgungszeiten antraten, wie aus einer klassischen Untersuchung von Edward Malone hervorzugehen

1 Vgl. Peter Gemeinhardt, *Die Heiligen. Von den frühchristlichen Märtyrern bis zur Gegenwart* (München: C.H. Beck, 2010). Zum frühchristlichen Martyriumsverständnis vgl. jetzt auch Candida R. Moss, The Other Christs. Imitating Jesus in Ancient Christian Ideologies of Martyrdom (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).